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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

25X1A

COUNTRY India
SUBJECT Election Setup in State of Madras/Attitude
Toward CommunismPLACE ACQUIRED
(BY SOURCE)

25X1A

DATE ACQUIRED
(BY SOURCE)

DATE (OF INFO.) 1953

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relationship. I knew that he had been a candidate for election to the legislature of the State of Madras and I expressed an interest in how the elections were conducted.

2. "The district I sought to represent is an area 32 miles long, 15 miles wide and includes the city of Madras. There are approximately 160 thousand voters in the district, 80 per cent of whom are illiterate. Illiteracy is no bar to voting. In fact anyone, either male or female, over 18 is eligible to vote. There is no tax levied for the privilege of voting.
3. "Each candidate when he has been accredited is allowed to select a symbol by which the voter will recognize him when he cast his ballot. In the last election such symbols as the lotus flower, elephant, and camel were used. Voting lists are prepared for the use of the checkers in English and in the language of the particular area.
4. "The elections are conducted, I imagine, much on the same lines as they are in the US. A candidate has posters printed. These posters contain little or no printed material but are confined to pictures and of course the candidate's symbol. The test of strength is usually decided in the number of personal appearances a candidate can make, and the number of workers he can enlist to electioneer for him. Because of the high illiteracy rate, the appeal for votes must be made by word of mouth. Thus the more people a candidate can have spreading his program and qualifications the better chance he has of getting votes. These workers receive pay for their services. It therefore becomes apparent that the candidate with the most money to spend has the best chance of getting elected.
5. "In the last election (presumed to be 1952) the winning candidate polled 15 thousand

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votes while the second ran received 14 thousand out of the possible number of 160 thousand.

6. "The legislature of Madras has 250 members. There is no salary connected with being a legislator, but an allowance of 40 rupees a day and traveling expenses are provided. It is an honorary position rather than one sought for monetary gain.
7. "The actions of the Communists in Madras are significant in that the Premier has declared open war against them. The majority of the people, in my opinion, are against the principals of Communism and openly resist their activities. Continued US aid and good will could save India from such domination."

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